

RURAL DELIVERIES.

A feature of the year has been the extension of the rural-delivery system, a graph in reference to which appears on page 15. The growth of the system is particularly noticeable in the Canterbury District, where fifty-one post-offices have been closed and 843 miles of rural deliveries established. The position to-day is that the majority of the settlers in the Canterbury District are now provided with a daily delivery, which, generally speaking, reaches them before 1 p.m.

The change-over to rural delivery is much appreciated by settlers, who formerly were required to visit the nearest post-office to collect and post their mail-matter.

The rural-delivery scheme generally is spreading steadily. The Department has now a cheap and efficient rural box which is available to settlers at cost price. Owing to the poor class of home-made boxes that the settlers were in many cases erecting, the Department found it necessary to compel all new subscribers to purchase standard boxes.

CINEMATOGRAPH-FILMS.

In view of their highly inflammable nature, it was decided both by my Department and by the Railway Department to accept cinematograph-films for transmission by post or by rail only when the films are properly packed in special fireproof containers. Particulars in regard to the matter are contained in the statement which follows.

COMPULSORY ENROLMENT OF ELECTORS.

The Department again placed its organization at the disposal of the Electoral Department in the matter of distributing claims-for-enrolment cards in connection with the new obligations cast upon electors. Altogether, over 700,000 cards were distributed, and, as 95 per cent. of them have been completed and returned to Registrars of Electors, it will be seen that the work was efficiently performed.

TUITION OF SCHOOL-CHILDREN BY CORRESPONDENCE.

During the period of the infantile-paralysis epidemic arrangements were made by the Education Department for the publication in the Press of lessons for school-children. Scholars were required to post their lessons to the headmaster of their school and to prepay the postage thereon. Teachers, however, were permitted to return the corrected lessons to the pupils without prepayment of postage, the total amount of postage being subsequently collected from the Education Boards concerned.

MOTOR REGISTRATION.

The Motor-vehicles Act, 1924, prescribes that each and every motor-vehicle in the Dominion shall be registered and licensed. The work of registering and licensing motor-vehicles, issuing registration-plates, and keeping the necessary records has been undertaken by the Post Office. The undertaking of these duties has placed on the shoulders of the Department a considerable amount of additional work and responsibility. Throughout the year the work requires the full time of several officers. The system of operation drawn up by the Department has worked well. In view of the fact that nothing in the nature of a Dominion Register of Motor-vehicles had previously been attempted, the promptitude and precision with which the Department was able to set up and operate machinery for the efficient conduct of the scheme is a matter deserving of commendation.

POSTAL CONGRESS.

Mr. A. T. Markman, Secretary of the Department, represented the Dominion at the Postal Union Congress held last year at Stockholm. Among the more important changes made by Congress, mention may be made of the reduction in postage-rates, reduction in land and sea transit rates, and the granting to New Zealand of the right to vote as an independent postal administration.